CLAIMS:

1.   A method of protecting the integrity of a computer system, the method comprising

-          loading a new system component into a system with a computer;

-          in response to said loading, sending information about said system component

5   and a configuration of the system with a to an acceptance server via a remote communication network;

-          verifying with said acceptance server whether the system with a computer including the system component and configured according to information about the configuration meets a criterion of interoperability;

10   -   sending an acceptance signal from the acceptance server to the system with a computer via the remote communication network;

-          qualifying operation of the system with a computer including the system component dependent on the acceptance signal.

15   2.   A method according to Claim 1, comprising

-          sending information that determines a computer program for controlling a controllable apparatus from the controllable apparatus to the system with a computer, when the controllable apparatus is coupled to the system with a computer via a local communication network;

20   -   said system component being the computer program, the acceptance server being directed at verifying whether the computer program will execute in the configuration according to the criterion of interoperability;

-          control of an operation of the controllable apparatus by the system with a computer with the computer program being qualified according to the acceptance signal.

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3.   A system with a computer, the system comprising

-          means for introducing a new system component into the system;

-          an acceptance server;

-          a remote communication network;

-               an apparatus coupled to the acceptance server via the remote communication network, the apparatus being arranged to send information about said system component and a configuration of the system with a computer to the acceptance server via the remote communication network, in response to said loading;

5   -   said acceptance server being arranged to verify whether the system with a computer including the system component and configured according to information about the configuration meets a criterion of interoperability and to send an acceptance signal to the system with a computer via the remote communication network;

-               the apparatus being arranged to qualify operation of the system with a

10   computer including the system component dependent on the acceptance signal.

4.   An apparatus for use in a system with a computer, comprising

-               the computer;

-               an input for receiving a computer program for execution by the computer;

15   -   an communication interface for communication to a remote acceptance server, the apparatus being arranged to send information about the computer program and a configuration of apparatus to the acceptance server and to receive an acceptance server in return to said information, the apparatus being arranged to qualify execution of the computer program by the computer according to the acceptance signal.

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5.   An apparatus according to Claim 4 comprising a connection for connection to a controllable apparatus, the connection comprising said input for receiving the computer program, the computer program being a program for controlling the controllable apparatus via the connection, the apparatus qualifying control of the controllable apparatus according to

25   the acceptance signal.

6.   An apparatus according to Claim 4, the information about the configuration identifying the type of an apparatus, said criterion including a sub-criterion for the compatibility of the apparatus, as identified by the information about the configuration, and

30   the computer program.

7.   An apparatus according to Claim 4, the computer program being arranged to execute selectable ones of a plurality of functions, the acceptance signal comprising an

identification of the acceptability of respective ones of the functions, said qualifying being selective for the respective functions.

8.   An apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said qualifying comprises disabling execution of a part or whole of computer program, as far as identified as unacceptable by the acceptance signal.

9.   An apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said qualifying comprises generating a warning signal to a user about the computer program or parts thereof when a user attempts to cause operation of computer program or the parts thereof and/or generating the warning signal upon any first user action after reception of the acceptance signal.

10.   An apparatus according to Claim 4, the apparatus being arranged to execute enable unqualified execution at least part of the computer program until the apparatus has received the acceptance signal received from the acceptance server.

11.   A method of providing support for a system with a computer, the method comprising

-          providing an acceptance server coupled to a communication network;
-          receiving information with the server about a configuration of the system with a computer and a new system component of that system with a computer via the communication network;
-          checking with the server whether the system component and configured according to information about the configuration meets a criterion of interoperability;
-          sending an acceptance signal back from the server to a source of said information, the acceptance signal signaling whether said criterion of interoperability is met.

12.   A method according to Claim 11, wherein the server is selectively reachable through the communication network using a network address, the network address being specific to a predetermined type of apparatus, or family of types of apparatuses, the criterion being specialized to said family.

13.   A method according to Claim 11, wherein the new component is a computer program, the information comprising at least part of a code of said computer program, the

method comprising analyzing the executable code with the server to determine whether its effect meets the criterion when executed by the system with a computer.

14.   A method according to Claim 13, wherein the computer program is arranged to handle selectable ones of a set of events, the server determining handling which of the events meets said criterion, the acceptance signal particularizing which of the events are acceptable.